



Manager's Message

2024 Adopted Budget

Thank you for reviewing the 2024 Sedgwick County Adopted Budget.

Our emphasis for the 2024 budget was to continue our **phased approach emphasizing and course correcting compensation for county employees.**

Everyone understands that success of Sedgwick County government rests with the service provided by the foundation – our people. As such, we must be competitive in an ever-tightening job market with wages, benefits, and environment that allow us to attract and retain employees.

Recall that last year we focused on areas that were hardest hit by attrition and staffing shortages. To that end, we created an additional seven unique pay plans that included placing EMS and Fire into step plans. Through that strategy, the county committed an additional \$20.3M to employee salaries. This year, our HR team partnered with Evergreen Consultants to develop a market-based strategy for the roughly 1400 employees in the general pay plan. This adopted budget included an additional \$7.1M directed toward salary for that work group to bring employees closer to market rate.

For all employees of the county we also included an additional 3% general pay adjustment with the exception of those groups with step plans who will receive a 2% adjustment plus their scheduled steps. The Sedgwick County Fire District employees will move into a new 15-step plan for 2024. In total, Sedgwick County has added an increase of \$23.4M focused toward employee compensation for 2024. Cumulatively since 2022, Sedgwick County has increased employee compensation by roughly \$47.2M. We also know this does not complete our efforts concerning compensation and we will continue to look at adjustments in the future with an eye on the continuing local and national economic trends.

There is more. In 2024, we **added key strategic positions.**

These positions were added to the Election Commissioner and County Appraiser offices, along with one position addition in Emergency Communications and one position to Regional Forensic Science Center due to changing environments and demands.



We also supported an EMS request to staff two paramedics on an ambulance unit rather than the paramedic/EMT model that had been in place since 2018. Furthermore, we added a Billing Specialist to EMS. Similarly, we added a Fleet Mechanic to Sedgwick County Fire District #1 along with a Fire Training Officer. These additions and modifications will mean better service to end users and assist with increasing public demand in those areas.

Our adopted Capital Improvement Project budget **continued to address the environment that Sedgwick County employees and their clients function in on a daily basis.**

We added \$6.6M for facility upkeep and improvements, plus an additional \$760K in flood control and drainage projects in the county, above our normally budgeted maintenance of the Mitch Mitchell Floodway. We also added to our CIP efforts toward road and bridge improvements and maintenance around the county.

Additionally, our efforts emphasizing behavioral health will continue with the 2024 budget adoption. **This budget included a \$1M contingency to be utilized regarding behavioral health projects or efforts deemed important by the BOCC.**

In summary, our Board of County Commissioners and the leadership team are focused on the stability of our employees who provide essential services to this community along with the core mission objectives of Sedgwick County government. This adopted budget attempts to achieve this while being fiscally restrained and responsible to our tax paying public.

-Tom Stolz, *County Manager*

